ENGINEER UPDATE

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US Army Corps of Engineers
BUILDING STRONG®

Civilian receives new Steel de Fleury Medal

By Bernard Tate
Headquarters

Photos by F.T., HECSA

The Steel de Fleury Medal honors the contributions of lower-ranking Soldiers and civilians. Erin Sunde in Headquarters was the first civilian and the first USACE employee to receive the new medal.

Erin Sunde became the first civilian and the first person in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to receive the new Steel de Fleury Medal in a ceremony at USACE Headquarters on July 15.

"At the Engineer School, we talked about creating a new de Fleury Medal," said Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, the chief of engineers, during the ceremony. "We have the bronze de Fleury, the silver and the gold. But we came up with another one called the Steel de Fleury Medal, and it is for the people who get it done on the ground, for those people that when you look around your formation and say, 'If I've really got to get something done, I'm going to them.' USACE has not awarded one of these, so today we're awarding the first one to Erin."

The de Fleury Medal is an award given by the Engineer Regiment. It is named for Lt. Col. Francois de Fleury, a French engineer officer who served with the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. At the battle of Stony Point, N.Y., de Fleury took command after Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne and Col. Christian Denmark were injured. De Fleury led the American Soldiers over the wall of the British defenses, rushed the flagpole and cut down the British colors.

For his actions, the Continental Congress awarded de Fleury a special medal on Oct. 1, 1779. It was not the first medal authorized by Congress, but it was the first one actually created.

The Engineer Regiment adopted the medal because of the values demonstrated by de Fleury. The regiment awards three levels of de Fleury Medal. The bronze medal is presented to those who render significant service or support to an element of the Engineer Regiment. The silver medal is awarded to an individual who renders outstanding service and significant support to the regiment. The gold medal is given to an individual who exemplifies boldness, courage, and commitment to strong national defense.

The idea originated last November with the Council of Colonels and Brig. Gen. Bryan Watson, commanding general of the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

"Once a year the commandant of the Engineer School brings in all the brigade engineer commanders to talk about the tactical side of the Engineer Regiment," said Julius Nutter, the Army Engineer Association's (AEA) director of operations at Fort Leonard Wood. "They wanted an award to give to enlisted Soldiers and junior officers. I came up with several proposals, and they said they wanted something similar to the de Fleury Medal. I said 'Give me a name,' and they came up with the Steel de Fleury Medal."

The gold, silver and bronze de Fleury medals are given only to senior officers, NCOs, and civilians, and the award must be approved by a colonel or higher who is an AEA member. The Steel de Fleury Medal is awarded to first lieutenants and captains, specialists (E-4) serving their first tour of duty, sergeants and staff sergeants, warrant officers one and chief warrant officers two, and Department of the Army civilians GS 4-11. The approval authority is a lieutenant colonel or higher who is an AEA member.

The Steel De Fleury Medal is given to those who render excellent service in their jobs with an element of the Engineer Regiment. "We left the criteria vague so the approval authority could have a lot of latitude," Nutter said.

The Steel de Fleury Medal was approved in April, and awarded to 10 engineer Soldiers during the ENFORCE conference that month. Sunde, the deputy secretary of the general staff in Headquarters, was the first civilian and the first USACE employee to receive the award.

"I'm truly honored, and *very* surprised," Sunde said. "*I'm* the point of contact for processing de Fleury Medals here in Headquarters, but my coworkers kept this a complete secret from me! I have enjoyed working here for the past five years, and receiving the first Steel de Fleury Medal is a tremendous honor."

Insights

Corps has new command chaplain

By Col. Gary Sexton
Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

My new personalized Virginia license plate says it all: ENFP. That's right; I put my Myers-Briggs profile on my Jeep Wrangler. With just four letters I communicate that I am an **E**xtroverted i**N**tuitive **F**eeling **P**erceiver.

I have come to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers after an assignment with the 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command at Fort Bliss, Texas, where USACE is building the infrastructure of east Fort Bliss. Before my assignment in El Paso, I served as the command chaplain for the 18th Medical Command in Seoul, Korea.

I am the oldest of five sons born to a Signal Corps Soldier from upstate New York, and a Bell Telephone operator from rural Georgia. Except for two years as a secondary school teacher, I have had a life-long affiliation with the Army as either a family member or as a Soldier.

My wife, Frances Jo, was my high school sweetheart and we recently celebrated 33 years of marriage. We are blessed with four children ages 19-25.

I became a follower of Jesus at seven, but intentionality about my faith did not become a serious quest until I was in Augusta College in Augusta, Ga. I became involved with the Navigators, a campus discipleship ministry, and Godly men in my church encouraged me to consider pursuing a call to full-time ministry.

After college graduation, I taught for 18 months at a junior high school in Hephzibah, Ga. During my second year, I was appointed to be an in-school suspension coordinator, and that experience convinced me I should attend seminary and pursue full-time ministry.

Photo by F.T. Eyre, HECSA

Col. Gary Sexton is the new command chaplain of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

So my bride of one year and I moved to St. Louis, Mo., where I enrolled in the master of divinity program at Covenant Theological Seminary, the denominational school for the Presbyterian Church in America.

During my second year, I met an Army chaplain recruiter who showed me the perfect fit between my life experiences in an Army family, and God's leading me to a calling in the Army.

God has brought me to each of my assignments, including Germany when the Berlin Wall fell. Both Frances and I were children in Germany with our fathers when the wall was built. Two assignments in Korea gave me a love for the Korean people, and that is preparing me to have a Korean daughter-in-law.

I look forward to serving as the pastor for the USACE team. This Headquarters is filled with the challenge of taking the organization from good to great. My goal is to engage a ministry of presence by visiting the USACE family one person at a time and one district at time, to build relationships, and to listen to each life story with compassion and concern. I am confident that God's presence and blessing will continue to touch the USACE family in times of trial and times of celebration.

Please feel free to contact me with your concerns as I move among you to listen and learn. I promise to pray regularly for God's protection and provision for USACE as we build upon the sure foundation of His word, and as His Spirit indwells us by faith.

My prayer for the USACE family is shaped by my favorite promise in the Bible, Psalm 37:4, which says "Delight thyself in the Lord and He will give you the desire of your heart."

Essayons!

Pro deo et patria (For God and country)

(The opinions in this article are those of the writer and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.)

Commentary

We are all Corps commmunicators

By David Lipsky
North Atlantic Division

Every person in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a communicator. We write letters, talk on the telephone, or interact with the public in some way. We grant or deny a permit, conduct public meetings, work with the news media, conduct tours or respond to disasters.

Many of us attend small business conferences or work with partners or customers. Some routinely speak before the general public or special interest groups.

My question: *Does what we say and how we say it contribute to the success of USACE?*

Strategic communication.
This is where strategic communication comes in. Strategic communication uses planning and discipline to tell an organization's story.

Other groups routinely use strategic communication to influence public opinion. For example:

- Do you prefer imported cars or domestics?
- Did the public win or lose in healthcare reform?
- Who do you vote for in a presidential election, and why?

In most cases, your answers will *not* be based on personal experience and knowledge, but on the influence of someone else's strategic communication planning.

Vital. When USACE uses planning and discipline in its communication, people are more likely to accept that our information as valid. Often, the public sees USACE as "owning" the project, not Congress, the administration, another agency or a foreign government.

So, a basic part of our communication *must* be to build trust and confidence in USACE.

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Commander, USACE.....Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp
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Editor .....Bernard W. Tate

New Orleans District tackles oil spill

By Ricky Boyett
and Amanda Jones
New Orleans District

(This is the first in a series of articles about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.)

On May 5, 11 days after oil was first discovered gushing from the Deepwater Horizon's damaged wellhead, New Orleans District received the first emergency permit request from the Louisiana National Guard to build a pier in the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet for loading oil booms.

During the following 90 days, the district received 54 more emergency permit requests, authorizing 44, denying two and withdrawing eight at the request of the applicant.

This unprecedented environmental catastrophe threatens short- and long-term impacts to the economy, wildlife and the fragile ecosystem of the Gulf Coast. Responding to the emergency has required the consolidated efforts of federal, state, local and private stakeholders.

Permits. The Corps' role in the response has been under our regulatory authority and environmental compliance. As a result, New Orleans District's Regulatory Branch has been operating under the NOD-20 permit for emergency procedures.

"This permit allows the district to conduct an expedited assessment of any emergency permit request that protects against environmental hazards, loss of property or immediate economic hardships," said Pete Serio, chief of Regulatory Branch.

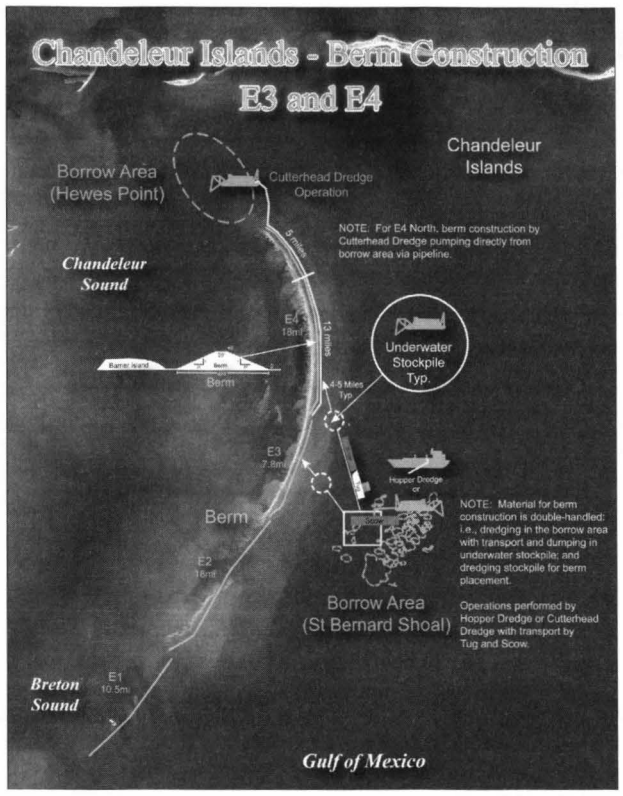
Under the standard Department of the Army regulatory procedures, the permit process takes between 90 and 120 days, depending on the proposed project's complexity and potential environmental impact.

In comparison, the NOD-20 process has allowed the district's regulatory team to issue 20 permits on the same day the request was received, 15 on the following day, three in two days, two in three days, one in four days, one in five days, one in nine days and one in 15 days.

Innovation. Many of these emergency permit requests reflect the innovation being applied to combat the oil encroaching on Louisiana's coast and wetlands. Emergency requests authorized under the NOD-20 permit include:

- 414,680 linear feet of oil booms
- 208,560 linear feet of sand berms
- 91,080 linear feet of HESCO baskets
- 73,979 linear feet of Tiger Dams (large water-filled tubes often used in emergency flood risk reduction)
- 14,450 linear feet of barges
- 5,333 linear feet of inflatable coffer dams
- 2,846 linear feet of sand bags
- 2,160 linear feet of rock closures
- 1,703 linear feet of sheet pile bulkheads
- 1,250 linear feet of earth plugs for interior canals

"If every permitted project, not including Louisiana's sand berm project, is fully constructed, more than 600,000 linear feet of potential oil protection will be in place," Serio said.



Graphic courtesy of New Orleans District

This map shows the sand berms that were built near the Chandeleur Islands to protect marshes and wetlands against the oil spill.

Although the NOD-20 permit allows expedited processing, USACE must review each request, ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable laws. To do this, New Orleans District has worked closely with federal, state, local and nongovernmental partners. The combined experience and expertise of these partners is an invaluable asset to ensure that a project's anticipated benefits outweigh any potentially adverse impacts.

Many of the emergency permit requests reflect great ingenuity in finding solutions to the threats that face the Louisiana coast. Innovation is a critical component of emergency response efforts, but it is the Corps' responsibility to ensure good ideas are supported by science and engineering.

Additionally, any emergency permit issued under NOD-20 is considered temporary. Within 30 days of issuance, the applicant must submit either a restoration plan for the impacted site, or a full Department of the Army permit application to continue construction or maintain existing structures.

Following submission, the regulatory team will re-evaluate the permit request using the comprehensive review process, including the public notice period and, if needed, an environmental impact statement.

Sand berms. New Orleans District received the largest and most complex of Louisiana's permit requests for the Deepwater Horizon incident. On May 11, Regulatory Branch received the state's request to build a sand barrier about 100 miles long off the Louisiana coast using material dredged from locations nearby.

Following the NEPA-required interagency review, the state submitted a revised application on May 14 to address the agency comments and to extend the sand berm concept further west. After further discussions among the resource agencies, USACE, and the state regarding technical analyses, the state submitted additional information on May 21 and again on May 24.

Six reaches. After careful consideration of the available information, and working closely with Louisiana, the coastal parishes and the federal partners, New Orleans District proffered the emergency permit May 27 (with special conditions), authorizing the state to proceed with six of the requested 19 reaches.

These six reaches were identified as critical locations where greater immediate benefit is likely to be achieved with minimal adverse disruption of coastal circulation.

Louisiana accepted the Corps' offered permit to build the six reaches on June 3. As part of the permit's special conditions, USACE and interested resource agencies are closely monitoring the progress of the sand berm construction. To date, the state has built about 1.2 miles of the authorized 39.5 miles of berm.

If the evaluation of available information and agency comments demonstrates that a proposed project does not best serve the public, it is the Corps' responsibility to deny the permit request.

Rock dikes. Jefferson Parish submitted a request to place rock dike structures within the Barataria Basin on June 7, and amended June 24. In addition to the technical information submitted by the parish and comments received from resource agencies and the scientific community, New Orleans District further sought technical assessments from scientists and engineers from the Mississippi Valley Division and Engineer Research and Development Center to review the project's benefits and impacts.

After careful examination of all available information, the district determined that the potential adverse impacts of the rock dikes in the proposed passes posed greater damage to the barrier islands and basin than the anticipated benefits of stopping intruding oil into the marshes. Based on this conclusion, the only responsible action was to deny the project.

Public outreach. The magnitude of the oil discharge and its potential impact throughout the Gulf Coast created significant public interest in the emergency response. In the complex, dynamic emergency environment, it became critical to ensure that any interested parties had access to the most recent, accurate information regarding the Corps' response efforts.

To meet this need, New Orleans District combined traditional public information approaches (such as press releases and stakeholder newsletters) with social media websites (such as Facebook and Twitter) to reach a wide audience.

In addition, the district created a Web page devoted to the emergency permit actions for the Deepwater Horizon incident. Updated daily, the Web page contains a list of every permit request received, the applicant, date received and current status. Clicking on any permit will take the visitor to all documentation associated with the permit. For more information, visit www.mvn.usace.army.mil/pao/mvnoilspill.asp.

Final commander takes GRD's helm

By LaDonna Davis
Gulf Region District

Col. Jon Christensen is the last person to command a unit with the initials GRD.

On July 9, Christensen became the final commander of Gulf Region District when Col. Dionysios Anninos relinquished command of the district during a change of command ceremony at GRD headquarters in Baghdad.

As the senior engineering commander, Christensen manages engineering and construction services throughout GRD as part of the reconstruction efforts in Iraq. The district currently manages more than 245 construction projects in all 18 provinces in Iraq.

"This is a 'get to' moment for me," Christensen said. "I get to command this fine organization. This is what I asked for and this is what I wanted to do. I look forward to working beside all of you as we finish what we started here at GRD."

Christensen's previous assignment was commander of St. Paul District.

Anninos commanded a 2,030-person joint service organization that included Army, Navy and Air Force service members, Department of the Army civilians, and Iraqi associates and contractors in offices throughout Iraq. He also managed more than $700 million of construction and reconstruction projects in support of U.S. military forces, U.S. Department of State, Iraqi Security Forces, Iraq infrastructure, and Iraq civil works.

"I'm proud to have commanded a workforce that is constantly seeking and striving to deliver quality facilities and services to the government of Iraq," Anninos said. "I'm thankful to the workforce that could dream of things that never were and make them real."

Gulf Region District was activated on July 7, 2009, as the enduring district following the deactivation of Gulf Region Division and the consolidation of Gulf Region North, Central and South districts. With the responsible drawdown of troops in Iraq, GRD will close its doors around the end of 2011.

Photo by M. Ameer, Gulf Region District

Brig. Gen. Kendall Cox, Transatlantic Division commander, passes the flag to Col. Jon Christensen, the incoming (and last) GRD commander.

Disaster response PRTs

Teams provide emergency power

By Jennifer Lynch
Headquarters

(This is the second in a series of articles about the Corps' emergency planning and response teams.)

Following a natural disaster or emergency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can provide state and local officials with emergency electric power at critical public facilities as part of the federal government's National Response Framework.

Mission priorities

USACE has emergency power planning and response teams (PRTs) throughout the country ready to deploy and provide support ranging from technical expertise to "turn key" installation of emergency generators at critical public facilities. During emergencies, priorities are determined by state and/or local officials and fall into three categories:

Life saving: 911 centers, police and fire stations and medical facilities.

Life sustaining: Shelters, water and wastewater treatment and pumping facilities.

Other: Municipal facilities to reinstitute local command and control, and post-event recovery.

Emergency power mission

The emergency power PRTs work closely with the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Department of Energy, local and state entities, and contractors to execute this mission. Together they provide many services during emergencies, including:

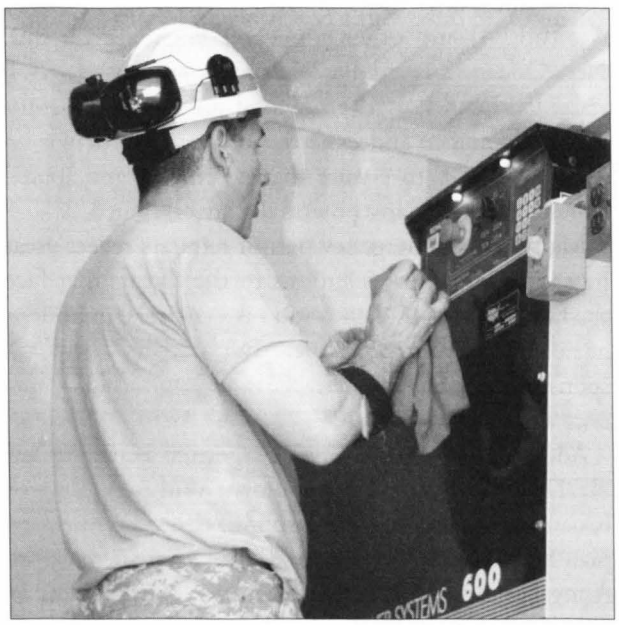


Photo courtesy of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power)

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Florence, a power station supervisor with the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), verifies the operation of a generator in Baton Rouge, La., during the Hurricane Katrina response.

- Assessing the emergency power requirements at a facility.
- Assessing the condition and capability of emergency generation equipment.
- Preparing, installing, operating, fueling and maintaining emergency generators.
- Safety inspections and damage assessments of electrical distribution systems and equipment.
- De-installing and returning generators when the normal power grid is operational.

249th Engineer Battalion

The 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) is one of the Corps' mainstays during emergency response. It is the only power generation unit in the Army, and the only active-duty unit assigned to USACE. The battalion often deploys to natural and manmade disasters, and to support overseas contingency operations.

During disasters, the Soldiers of the 249th assess critical electrical needs and manage the installation of generators to provide power for key community facilities such as hospitals, water and sewer treatment plants and law enforcement facilities until power companies can restore the commercial power distribution network.

Recent domestic deployments for the 249th include Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, the 2009 ice storms in Kentucky, the earthquake and tsunami in American Samoa, and the earthquake in Haiti.

During overseas contingency operations, the 249th generates power for coalition operating bases, and critical facilities such as wastewater treatment, dams and other public works to help the local people.

The 249th is headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va., and is made up of three active duty companies and one reserve company. Company A is based in Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Company B is at Fort Bragg, N.C.; Company C is at Fort Belvoir; and the reserve company, D Company, is based in Cranston, R.I.

For more information about the emergency power mission, please visit www.usace.army.mil/Emergency.

Photos courtesy of Jacksonville District

Water hyacinth has long been a problem to navigation in Florida, as this plant-choked waterway shows. Courtney Keck (left), Alexis Higle and Lt. Col. Nathaniel Rainey, Jacksonville District's deputy commander, were among those who released leafhoppers that feed on water hyacinth.

Leafhoppers released to attack invasive water hyacinth

By Barry Vorse
Jacksonville District

A tiny insect about the size of a flea may be one of the keys to suppressing an invasive aquatic plant that has often choked Florida navigable waters for more than 100 years.

Officials from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the St. Johns River Water Management District, the U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers gathered at the Edgefield Recreation Site just north of Palatka, Fla., to release Megamelus scutellaris, a South American planthopper, on the invasive plants.

Plant specific. Described as a miniature grasshopper the size of a flea, the insect has been studied by the USDA for five years. It eats *only* the water hyacinth, meaning it is "plant specific," which is a federal requirement of *any* insect imported to the U.S. to control invasive plants.

"Where we held the ceremony is no more than five miles away from where the first water hyacinth was introduced by farmers in the early 1800s," said Lt. Col. Nathaniel Rainey, deputy commander of Jacksonville District. "This effort was certainly a collaborative effort by the four agencies involved. We all have mandates to control aquatic plants and have been deeply involved for many years."

Center of expertise. Rainey noted that after the release of the plant into the wild, Congress enacted the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act of 1899. The act addressed a number of navigation issues and authorized USACE to control the water hyacinth and other aquatic plants in navigable channels.

"From that beginning, Jacksonville District has become a center of expertise for the control of this type of vegetation, and we have been treating it ever since," Rainey said. "You may recall how the St. Johns looked in the 1960s and 1970s when it was sometimes rare to see open water on the river in downtown Jacksonville. Over the years we have gotten better at how we approached this problem."

Photo courtesy of Jacksonville District

Dr. Phil Tipping, a research entomologist, points out damage done by the leafhopper.

"This is an important day in our work," said Dr. Phil Tipping, a top research entomologist with the U.S. Department of Agricultural Research Service in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., who brought thousands of the insects to the event. "I hope we can all convene here in four years to see how successful this effort has been. That's when we'll really know."

Tipping planned to spread thousands more Megamelus in the days after the event in a water storage area near farm fields around the Putnam-St. Johns County line. Additional thousands of bugs will probably be added in the near future.

Student aid. "I am so glad to see young people in attendance," Tipping said, referring to about 30 students from Interlachen High School. "We're doing this so they, the future generations, can enjoy areas such as the Edgefield site."

The release at the site was primarily financed by the FWC, which provided more than $300,000 for the project.

"Phil and his people made this happen," said Don Schmitz, a research program manager in the FWC's Invasive Plant Management Section. "They put extra effort into completing all of the research before introducing a bio-control into an ecosystem in record time."

Special guests at the event were Mary Murphy and Lynn Hoffman, who donated the property for the Edgefield Recreation Site to the state of Florida in 2001.

"We're so happy to see things like today's ceremony happen on the property," Murphy said. "We donated the property, which had been in my family since 1860, so that wonderful things like this could be done for the environment. And it was so good to see the teenagers out here learning about nature."

Ranger: 'I'm excited to go to work'

By Mary Markos
St. Louis District

At 7 a.m. on June 22, Carlyle Lake park ranger Kim Hammel received good news.

"I was so glad that I was sitting down," Hammel said. "What I thought would be a typical day at the Carlyle Lake Project Office turned out to be a day I will truly remember. I was so excited!"

Hammel, who has been with St. Louis District for 21 years, was selected to receive the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 2010 Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence. The award recognized Hammel for her interpretive efforts through partnerships in the community, and for her creativity in delivering the interpretive message.

"We're proud of Kim and the work she does at Carlyle Lake," said Col. Thomas O'Hara, St. Louis District commander. "She is a dedicated team member with a passion and drive that moves Carlyle Lake and St. Louis District toward excellence."

Hammel's work affects the 2.9 million visitors to the lake each year, and has lasting effects on the environment. Her signature event, the lake's annual "Celebrate the Earth," delivered educational and entertaining environmental programs to 3,000 students from 23 area schools in 2009. She helped the event grow from its original 500 students by using volunteers and field donations from local businesses.

Hammel also pioneered a butterfly program at local schools to allow youth to better understand the metamorphosis process. The program, which has her collecting butterfly eggs, larva and chrysalis, is often requested by teachers and schoolchildren.

"As an interpreter, I feel it is important to educate the public about the Corps' mission, environmental stewardship and water safety," Hammel said. "By educating the public through interpretation, our lake visitors have a better understanding of the operation of the lake, how to stay safe, fit and improve their quality of life for future generations. By working with partners in the community to create recreation opportunities and host special events, we increase lake visitors, which generates more spending and economic development in the area while providing opportunities for people of all ages to connect with nature."

Photo courtesy of St. Louis District

Park ranger Kim Hammel shows children how to wear a life jacket.

Throughout 2009, Kim worked as part of the Carlyle Lake Prairie View Trail Committee, which includes the City of Carlyle, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development and county and township officials. They established a bike trail that would offer more than 60 miles of multiuse routes over federal, state, city, county and township roads around the lake.

By partnering with these agencies, Hammel leveraged funds that will result in increased tourism to the region, and provide a safe environment for bicyclists. This multiyear effort has already resulted in more than $300,000 for trail improvements around the project.

For Hammel, it is the connection with nature and lake visitors that keep her motivated.

"Every morning as I get up and prepare to go to work, I'm proud to put on my uniform, and I'm excited to go to work," she said. "Each day is full of challenges and opportunities to make a difference at the lake and in the community. Whether using my creative talents to inspire and share my passion of environmental stewardship with a group of grade school students, or working to forge a partnership in the community to improve quality of life, economic development and promote tourism, I feel I can touch many lives and make a difference through my job."

Making a difference in the community is especially important to Hammel because she resides in the Carlyle Lake vicinity. "I feel that if the community and lake are supporting each other together, they will grow stronger together."

Hammel said that wetland conservation is also important for the future. She paints in her spare time, and every year she donates one of her paintings to Ducks Unlimited for auction. It is estimated her paintings have helped the organization raise more than $3,000.

She combined her artistic ability with her passion for water safety to create an 8-foot-tall wood cut-out of Bobber, the Water Safety Dog, for use in local events and parades. Hammel also spearheaded community emphasis on water safety by partnering with eight radio stations and numerous local businesses to broadcast and display water safety messages.

Hammel received her award Aug. 2 at the 2010 USACE Summer Leader's Conference in Seattle. The award is named for Hiram M. Chittenden, an Army engineer officer and author. During his career Chittenden commanded Seattle District 1906-08, and worked with notable projects including Yellowstone National Park, Yosemite National Park and the Lake Washington Canal Project in Seattle.

HR Corner

Family program makes progress

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers workforce supports the overseas contingency operations (OCO) mission no matter how great the challenge or demand. Both Iraq and Afghanistan continue to benefit from the successful USACE construction mission.

The USACE Family Readiness Program was established to enhance the quality of life and morale of those who deploy in support of OCO missions and emergency operations that require USACE support.

The program supports the Soldier, civilian deployee and their family members before, during and after deployment. In addition, the program may also support any USACE employee and their family members affected by a wellness issue, such as death in the family, surgery or major illness.

The Family Readiness Program has made enormous progress in the past year, including establishing an office at USACE Headquarters to oversee and support the program.

In addition, each division has a regional community support coordinator (RCSC) to lead the program in conjunction with family support coordinators at the districts. The RCSC ensures the Regional Family Readiness Program is functioning appropriately in each division. Establishing a family readiness program and hiring employees dedicated to working family readiness issues both confirm the Corps' commitment to taking care of the employee and his or her family within USACE.

The RCSC and family support coordinators are equipped with an abundance of resources to assist employees and their family members, including but not limited to:

- Army OneSource at www.myarmyonesource.com
- Military OneSource at www.militaryonesource.com
- American Red Cross at www.redcross.org
- Operation Military Kids at www.operationmilitarykids.org

The Family Readiness Program coordinators are:

Headquarters -- Amira Fahmy
Great Lakes & Ohio River Division -- Will Smith
Mississippi Valley Division -- Jessica Gilmore
North Atlantic Division -- Connie Morinello
Northwestern Division -- Eleni O'Neill
Pacific Ocean Division -- Zeny Bate
South Atlantic Division -- Charles James
South Pacific Division -- DeAnn Isenberg
Southwestern Division -- Nila Gillespie
Transatlantic District – C.J. Muncy

The Family Readiness Program is designed to reduce the stress on our deployed Soldiers and civilians and their family members by reassuring them that the USACE family will be there in a time of need. Knowing that they are not alone and that their family is in good hands helps them make an informed decision about deployment.

AROUND THE CORPS

Maj. Evan Ting (right), commander of the 565th Engineer Detachment, unfurls the unit guidon with Lt. Col. Jon Chytra, commander of Honolulu District. Sgt. 1st Class Colleen Hatfield holds the guidon.

565th Engineer Detachment

The 565th Engineer Detachment, Forward Engineer Support Team-Advance (FEST-A) unfurled its colors for the first time July 13 at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. This marked a new beginning for the team as it became a deployable Army field unit.

The FEST-A has a detachment commander, a non-commissioned officer-in-charge, and six DoD civilians including a geographic information system specialist/cartographer; contract specialist; and civil, environmental, mechanical and electrical engineers.

Their missions include reconnaissance, design and planning, construction management, limited contingency contracting support, and other general engineering tasks.

National recreation trails

Six USACE trails were selected as national recreation trails by the Department of Interior. They join more than 1,080 trails coast-to-coast that add up to more than 12,500 miles.

The national recreation trail designation recognizes trails that link communities to recreation opportunities on public lands and in local parks. As the nation's largest federal provider of outdoor recreation, the Corps' 422 lake and river projects in 43 states provide more than 4,500 miles of diverse trails.

The six trails are:

Kaskaskia River Confluence Trail, Lower, Ill. -- The highlight of this .4-mile trail is access to the confluence of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi rivers. This is the only public river access site on the Mississippi River for 100 miles in Illinois. The trail traverses a bottomland forest, and is used for walking, bicycling, jogging, and educational and interpretive programs.

Des Moines River Water Trail, Saylorville Lake, Iowa -- This 19-mile trail is a scenic, historical and natural experience with multiple access points. The trail serves a diverse group of trail users and connects rural and urban populations. This river corridor is on a major migratory flyway, and offers bird and wildlife viewing opportunities during all seasons.

Spyglass Hill Trail, Enid Lake, Miss. – This 17-mile trail offers many recreation opportunities including camping, wildlife watching, equestrian riding and scenic views.

Black River Hike & Bike Trail, Clearwater Lake, Mo. – This 3.25-mile gentle paved and gravel trail winds through bottomland hardwoods and pines along the Black River below Clearwater Dam. The 10-foot-wide trail offers a great diversity of scenery, and is perfect for biking, jogging or walking. Five entry points provide multiple options, from a 1-mile walk to a 3.25-mile bike ride.

Knob Hills Trail, Grapevine Lake, Texas – This 5.43-mile natural surface trail traverses prairies and bottomland. Hikers and bicyclists share it with equestrians for part of its length.

Lacy Point Nature Trail, Waco Lake, Texas – This is the only public interpretive trail between Fort Worth and Georgetown, Texas to offer signed access to horse riders, cyclists, bank fishermen and hikers. The 19-mile trail features interpretive trail markers, directional maps and picnic tables along the shore.

The *John H. B. Dillard, Jr.*, patrols San Francisco Bay near Sausalito, Calif.

New San Francisco vessel

San Francisco District launched its newest vessel, the *John A. B. Dillard, Jr.*, at the Sausalito Base Yard. The boat is named for Maj. Gen. John Albert B. Dillard, Jr., who commanded South Pacific Division from 1966 to 1968.

The *Dillard* is an 86-foot catamaran. It joins a district fleet that includes the *Raccoon* and *Grizzly*, two boats that have removed thousands of tons of hazardous debris from San Francisco Bay for more 50 years.

Built with two double-propeller bow thrusters, the *Dillard* allows operators to respond to emergencies faster than its two counterparts. It is equipped with a pedestal-mounted grapple crane for lifting heavy objects out of the water, and has a 15-ton deck load capacity. The ship can also be used for diving operations, bottom profile surveying and emergency command-and-control during disasters. Bunks, showers and a full galley gives the crew around-the-clock capability.

"It was an unprecedented investment by the district," said Mike Dillabough, chief of the district's Operations and Readiness Division. "If the *Dillard* lasts as long as her sister ships, then we have ensured our missions can be carried out through 2080 and probably longer."

Dams sector exercise

The Department of Homeland Security, USACE, and public and private stakeholders from the Green River Valley in Washington State are conducting the 2010 Dams Sector Exercise Series – Green River Valley (DSES-10) to address regional disaster issues.

DSES-10 is analyzing the impact of a flood scenario in the communities of Auburn, Kent, Renton and Tukwila. The primary goals include greater understanding of the potential impacts of floods, identifying critical infrastructure that influences local and regional disruptions, and helping public and private stakeholders improve recovery strategies and business continuity plans. This exercise will enhance regional resilience and promote partnerships at the local and regional levels.

Public affairs awards

The Locke L. Mouton and Michael C. Robinson awards honor USACE public affairs practitioners. The winners for 2009 are:

Michael C. Robinson Award (Public Affairs Practitioner of the Year) -- Edward Voigt, Philadelphia District

Locke L. Mouton Awards

Media Relations and Public Information: Howard Hanson Dam -- Casondra Brewster, Seattle District

Community Relations: USFK's Good Neighbor Program -- Joseph Campbell, Far East District

Command Information: Redesign of NAU's Command Information Program -- Justin Ward, Europe District

Emergency/Disaster Response: Ohio River Markland Navigation Lock Gate Failure and Repair -- Carol Labashosky, Louisville District

Ronald J. Ruffennach Communicator of the Year Award -- Creg Hucks, Sacramento District

Mitigation banking conference

The 14th National Mitigation & Ecosystem Banking Conference will convene in Baltimore in 2011. This remains the only national conference that brings together key regulators, bankers, users and providers of services in the mitigation, conservation and ecosystem banking marketplace.

The conference seeks presentations from regulators, mitigation and conservation bankers, users, engineers, investors, environmental organizations and others with experience in the mitigation, conservation and ecosystem banking industry.

Submit a summary of your presentation (about 300 words) along with the presenter's complete contact information to cbahler@comcast.net, or fax to 703-997-8690. Visit www.mitigationbankingconference.com for more information on this conference.

Great Wonders of USACE

Von Braun Complex will be home to space war agencies

By Lisa Coghlan
Mobile District

Space may or may not be "the final frontier," as William Shatner and Patrick Stewart used to say in the introduction to each *Star Trek* episode, but Uncle Sam is taking space seriously as the next battlefield.

The U.S. Army's Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC), and DoD's Missile Defense Agency (MDA) are America's primary operators in this new kind of warfare.

Space war agencies

The Wernher Von Braun Complex will be home to members of the SMDC and the MDA, which is partially relocating to Redstone Arsenal, Ala., from Washington D.C. as part of the Base Realignment and Closure 2005 decision.

"Currently, MDA is located in the National Capital Region in Washington, D.C.," said Ron Kalifeh, project manager. "Sometimes they have to travel miles to attend meetings.

"When they move to VB III, they will just have to walk down the hallway to attend a meeting," Kalifeh said. "All conference and meeting rooms have video teleconference capability. This will save them from traveling to a meeting in a different city."

These buildings are not Starfleet Command, but the scope of the complex suggests the comparison.

Artwork courtesy of Mobile District

The Wernher Von Braun Complex will be home to the U.S. Army's Space and Missile Defense Command, and DoD's Missile Defense Agency.

Size & cost

The first building of the Von Braun Complex for SMDC, called Phase I (VB 1), was completed in November 2003 and is about 220,000 square feet. Phase II (VB II) for MDA was completed in June 2007 and is 230,000 square feet. VB I cost $32 million and VB II cost $44 million.

When complete, all three buildings combined will enclose about 1.3 million square feet and house more than 4,500 personnel, making them the largest office complex on Redstone Arsenal.

VB III alone will be the largest office building in Alabama. It is under construction, and will be larger than VB I and VB II combined. It is a six-story, 840,000-square-foot building, and will house administrative spaces, a cafeteria, an 800-seat auditorium, a fitness center and a central mechanical plant.

VB III will cost $212 million and will house more than 2,650 SMDC and MDA employees. Completion is slated for next January

Quality of life

"Having a full-service cafeteria, fitness center, ATMs and coffee bars in the building will enhance the employees' quality of life and efficiency," Kalifeh said. "Once they arrive at work, they will not have to take time out of their day to leave the building."

The fictional Starfleet Command was a beautiful place, and the Wernher Von Braun Complex was also designed with aesthetics in mind.

A large courtyard is accessible from any of the three buildings. The courtyard will be landscaped with a fountain, and seating areas will be staggered throughout the yard.

The project is a design-build contract and was incrementally funded, with initial funding in fiscal 2008 of $67 million, $127 million in fiscal 2009 and 27.8 million in fiscal 2010.

"Mobile District has been working on this project with the Missile Defense Agency and the Space and Missile defense Command since BRAC 05 was announced," Kalifeh said. "We conducted design charrettes with them to ensure the building meets their needs.

Green technology

"This facility is being designed and built using the latest in 'green' technology," Kalifeh said. "All systems and lighting are very energy efficient. Recycled products are being used to the greatest extent possible. Construction waste is being recycled. Some of the construction waste being recycled is concrete, steel and cardboard. Some of the materials incorporated into the building have a recycled content, such as carpet, steel and ceiling tile."

Wernher Von Braun

The Von Braun Complex name honors Wernher Von Braun, who was one of the most important rocket developers and champions of space exploration from the 1930s to the 1970s.

Von Braun moved to Redstone Arsenal in the 1950s where he built the Army's Jupiter ballistic missile. He also became one of the most prominent spokesmen for space exploration in the U.S. He died on June 16, 1977.

Communicators

Continued from page 3

Defense. Suppose the opponent of a project posts a statement on its web page or sends out a news release claiming that the Corps' economic and environmental data are flawed.

If the district responsible for the project ignores this challenge, it may validate the opponent's statement in the public's mind.

Some examples of responses that the district could take include:

- Use examples of successful projects to explain their actions.
- Write talking points that speakers and writers can use to explain the project.
- The project manager could discuss the process in a public meeting or on local cable television.

In addition, USACE must maintain an awareness and interest in the messages of other people. What are both opponents and advocates saying about a project or program? How are they influencing others? Is USACE providing balanced information to effectively offset negative assertions?

Public affairs. Although strategic communication seems daunting and esoteric, there *is* a resource to help anyone in USACE devise an effective strategic communication plan -- the Public Affairs Office (PAO).

Every major USACE location has a PAO. The PA community is not just a group of "spin doctors" who manage web pages and take calls from the news media. They are a highly educated and disciplined group that knows how to help you communicate effectively.

Resource. The PAO are a resource for all project and program managers, ready to help with strategic communication anywhere in USACE.

With a little planning and discipline we can all become more effective communicators, building trust and support among our stakeholders. Ultimately, this will help USACE achieve its goals.

(David Lipsky is the public affairs officer of North Atlantic Division. You can contact him with comments or questions about strategic communication at david.j.lipsky@usace.army.mil)